CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1340
17 August 1995

Original: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 17 AUGUST 1995 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE CONFERENCE ADDRESSED TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF A STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES MADE ON 11 AUGUST 1995 CONCERNING UNITED STATES NUCLEAR TESTING POLICY AND A WHITE HOUSE FACT SHEET ISSUED ALSO ON 11 AUGUST 1995 CONCERNING UNITED STATES CTBT SAFEGUARDS

Attached is a copy of a Statement by the President of the United States, made on 11 August 1995, concerning United States nuclear testing policy, and a White House Fact Sheet, issued also on 11 August, concerning United States CTBT Safeguards.

I would be grateful if you would issue these texts as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament and distribute it to all member States and non-member participants in the work of the CD.

(Signed) Stephen J. Ledogar
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Statement by President Clinton, 11 August 1995, The White House

Today I am announcing my decision to negotiate a true zero yield comprehensive test ban. This is an historic milestone in our efforts to reduce the nuclear threat to build a safe world. The United States will now insist on a test ban that prohibits any nuclear weapons test explosion, or any other nuclear explosion. I am convinced this decision will speed the negotiations so that we can achieve our goal of signing a comprehensive test ban next year.

As a central part of this decision, I am establishing concrete, specific safeguards that define the conditions under which the United States will enter into a comprehensive test ban. These safeguards will strengthen our commitments in the areas of intelligence, monitoring and verification, stockpile stewardship, maintenance of our nuclear laboratories, and test readiness.

They also specify the circumstances under which I would be prepared, in consultation with Congress, to exercise our supreme national interest rights under a comprehensive test ban to conduct necessary testing if the safety or reliability of our nuclear deterrent could no longer be certified.

As a part of this arrangement I am today directing the establishment of a new annual reporting and certification requirement that will ensure that our nuclear weapons remain safe and reliable under a comprehensive test ban.

I appreciate the time, the energy and the wisdom that the Secretaries of State, Defense and Energy, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Directors of Central Intelligence and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency have all devoted to the review of this crucial national security issue over the last several months.

American leaders since Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy have believed a comprehensive test ban would be a major stride toward stopping the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Now, as then, such a treaty would greatly strengthen the security of the United States and nations throughout the world. But now, unlike then, such a treaty is within our reach.

It would build upon the successes we have achieved so far: securing a permanent extension of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty; freezing North Korea's nuclear program; cutting existing nuclear arsenals by putting the START I Treaty into force; persuading Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan to give up their nuclear weapons and to reach agreements with Russia that now mean that both our nations no longer target our missiles at each other.

A comprehensive test ban is the right step as we continue pulling back from the nuclear precipice, a precipice which we began to live with 50 years ago this week. It moves us one step closer to the day when no nuclear weapons are detonated anywhere on the face of the Earth.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

11 August 1995

Fact sheet: Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty Safeguards

A Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is conditioned on:

A. The conduct of a Science-based Stockpile Stewardship program to ensure a high level of confidence in the safety and reliability of nuclear weapons in the active stockpile, including the conduct of a broad range of effective and continuing experimental programs.

B. The maintenance of modern nuclear laboratory facilities and programs in theoretical and exploratory nuclear technology which will attract, retain, and ensure the continued application of our human scientific resources to those programs on which continued progress in nuclear technology depends.

C. The maintenance of the basic capability to resume nuclear test activities prohibited by the CTBT should the United States cease to be bound to adhere to this treaty.

D. Continuation of a comprehensive research and development program to improve our treaty-monitoring capabilities and operations.

E. The continuing development of a broad range of intelligence gathering and analytical capabilities and operations to ensure accurate and comprehensive information on worldwide nuclear arsenals, nuclear weapons development programs, and related nuclear programs.

F. The understanding that if the President of the United States is informed by the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Energy (DOE) - advised by the Nuclear Weapons Council, the Directors of DOE's nuclear weapons laboratories and the Commander of the United States Strategic Command - that a high level of confidence in the safety or reliability of a nuclear-weapon type which the two Secretaries consider to be critical to our nuclear deterrent could no longer be certified, the President, in consultation with Congress, would be prepared to withdraw from the CTBT under the standard "supreme national interests" clause in order to conduct whatever testing might be required.